(c) No, Sir. M/s. Sikri and Co. are not taking unnecessary adjournments in cases of scientists currently being heard CAT (PB) New Delhi on flimsy grounds to harass the employees. It is submitted that adjournments are not granted by the Hon'ble CAT on flimsy grounds.

(d) It is submitted that M/s. Sikri and Co. are not indulging in dilatory tactics hence the question of directing the said firm not to indulge in dilatory tactics, does not arise.

Central assistance to Bihar for small and marginal farmers

4400. SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in the recent past a substantial amount was provided by the Central Government to the State of Bihar as Central assistance for small and marginal farmers in the State;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the State Government has distributed only a small part of the Central assistance among the small and marginal farmers of the State and rest is lying unutilised with the State Government;

(d) if so, what are the details thereof and the reasons for not distributing of Central funds by the State Government; and

(e) what action Government propose to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ARVIND NETAM): (a) to (e) Under the Special Scheme for assistance to small and marginal farmers implemented during 1992-93, Rs. 19.24 crore was made available to Bihar. The various programmes including reclamation and development of salt affected land, supply of small tractors/power tillers, strengthening of soil and fertiliser laboratories which were sought by the State Government to be included for implementation under the special scheme for assistance to small and marginal farmers was approved by the Central Government.

Under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Assistance to small and marginal farmers for construction of shallow tubewells/dug wells, which was transferred to the States w.e.f. 1-4-1992 as per the decision of National Development Council, an amount of Rs. 14.68 crore was transferred to Bihar during 1992-93. Against Rs. 89.23 crores released to the State Government of Bihar from 1988-89 to 1992-93 under this scheme, the State Government has reported that an amount of Rs. 90.35 crores as Central share has been utilised during this period.

Setting up of Small Farmers' Agri-business Consortium

4401. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have set up the Small Farmers Agri-business Consortium;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) what are the schemes proposed to be undertaken under the Consortium?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR): (a) No, Sir.

(b) In view of (a) above, question does not arise.

(c) and (d) Government have decided to set up a Small Farmers' Agri-business Consortium (SFAC). The aims and objectives and the details of structure of the proposed SFAC are being workedout.

Decline in the field of Agricultural Research and Education

4402. SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been a decline in agricultural research and agricultural education in real term in the 7th Plan;